Welcome Home

Up this close, the imperfect topography of the bright orange plastic base is prominent, speckles visibly missed by whatever process paints in the black jack-o'-lantern's features. Its symmetrical grin is acrid and petrochemical, invading my nostrils.

Moving out of the abandoned, mold-ridden RV in the junkyard after five months was only something I did because one of the few acquaintances that hadn't abandoned me had scored a job as an apartment manager. She insisted it would improve my focus, something I had to admit was frustratingly difficult to maintain.

She was right. Still laying where I have collapsed by the built-in bar separating the main living space and the kitchen, I have never been so clear of thought and vision.

A Welcome Home present on the counter. Black-handled Halloween candy bowl filled with pistachios.

The closest store to our rural neighborhood had been a two-pump gas station. The ice cream freezer in the back corner always stocked a row of pistachio pints amongst the popular flavors. Our last phone call before she disappeared had revealed that it was most likely the two of us, next door neighbors where our parents had settled to retire, that kept the supply in demand.

I don't remember falling, but, staring within kissing distance of this frozen face on the faded linoleum, that's what must have happened. For the first time in nearly seven years, I am smiling just the same.

The police refused to question the man the woman who had asked me to marry her and was leaving to be with me across the country, his $600,000 home on a private golf course and political affiliation - one that publicly included neo-Nazi organizations - placing him beyond suspicion with the local constabulary.

While unconscious: the most inseparable of dreams from reality. The distinct tactile sensation of the blade in my hand scraping sideways after striking his spine through his bloated stomach. Cardboard-colored leaves framing the scene like celebratory confetti in the chill breeze contrasting with the boiling-hot liquid on my hand and forearm. The camera's viewpoint was first-person, still the stretch of my lips exposing teeth was unmistakable behind the lens. The moment when transition to hero solidified apart from a lifetime's other fragments an achievement forever gilded in history.

My newly employed friend was indeed correct. This was a fantastic and fortuitous move after all.

(One of the most repeated tidbits of advice aimed at aspiring (always avoid alliteration - always) writers is:

'Write what you know.'

Did I mention I am a prophet?

Horror is often behind eyes.

The preceding story was submitted to the October Oddities writing contest held by Cat's Eye Press. I just received an email informing me that they have rejected my entry. Prizes were in increments of 15, 10, and 5 English pounds. It was sent in August 26th. Like my Deviations Be My Domino and Buying

What Is Sold, which describe a martyring assassination and the fact that telling someone about committing a crime is a sure-fire way to be charged with stated criminal act respectively, all three were written and/or published before the murder of Charlie Kirk, whose alleged murderer was apprehended when he told his father what he had done.

In no way am I disparaging the entrants whose works were selected by the horror publisher. I have not seen them, as they won't be available until October, and quality of authorship is certainly a subjective opinion.

I tell you I am a prophet.

You decide.

Stay Deviant.

Stay strong.

We need you your voice and actions now more than ever.

Readers familiar with my works here will surely recognize just how many elements of this barely four hundred word tale are fiction. Patricia Ann Roberts/Coffey/Dumas/Randle, 57, my fiancé and friend of thirty-nine years has been missing for nearly seven years, disappearing after attempting to escape the white supremacist narcissistic abuser she was living with in Lake Orion, Michigan - a state with twenty-two racist organizations operating within its boundaries. Internet searches reveal complaints of a Lake Orion business being openly racially discriminatory. The local police twice failed to confirm her presence at their address during welfare checks. LOPD has since both fired and demoted their chief and officers for corruption.)